بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of Allāh, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful

# Topic of Discussion: The Characteristics of a True Believer
# Ḥadīth #13 [ Discussion #14 ] – Part I

Lectures on Akhlāq given by His Eminence
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## Topic: The Characteristics of a True Believer – Part I

### Text of the Ḥadīth:

رُوِىَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ ٱللّٰهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) قٰالَ: يَكْمُلُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ إِيْمٰانَهُ حَتَّى يَحْتَوِى عَلٰى مِائَةَ وَ ثَلاٰثَ خِصٰالٍ: فِعْلٌ وَ عَمَلٌ وَ نِيَّةٌ وَ بٰاطِنٌ وَ ظٰاهِرٌ. فَقٰالَ أَمِيرُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ(عَلَيْهِ ٱلسَّلاٰمُ): يٰا رَسُولَ ٱللّٰهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مٰا ٱلْمِائَةَ وَ ثَلاٰثَ خِصٰالٍ؟ فَقٰالَ (صلى الله عليه وآله): يٰا عَلِيُّ مِنْ صِفٰاتِ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِ أَنْ يَكُونَ جَوّٰالُ ٱلْفِكْرِ، جوهرّى ٱلذِّكْرِ، كَثِيراً عِلْمُه عَظِيماً حِلْمُهُ، جَمِيل ٱلْمُنٰازِعَة...

**Translation of Ḥadīth:** It has been narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) said to Amīr al-Mo'minīn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (prayers be upon him), *"The true believer's faith will be completed when he possesses 103 particularities and these can be divided up into five categories: actions that have been done in the past, actions that are done and continue to be done (in the present and future), (his) intention, the external characteristics and the internal characteristics."* Amīr al-Mo'minīn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (prayers be upon him) said to the Prophet (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family), *"O' Messenger of Allāh! What are these 103 particularities?" The Prophet (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) replied, "O' ʿAlī! Of the characteristics of a true believer is that he is continuously in thought and the performs the remembrance of Allāh out loud, he possesses a great deal of knowledge, his forbearance is great and his confrontations (with others) is done with beauty…"*[1]

### Commentary of Ḥadīth:

In reality, this Ḥadīth is a complete course in Islāmic ethics (Akhlāq) which the Noble Messenger (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) presented to ʿAlī (prayers be upon him). In this talk, the Prophet (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) summarized the Islāmic morals into five categories which are: (past) actions, (continuous and future) actions, intention, internal characteristics and the external characteristics.

[1] Biḥār al-Anwār, Volume 64, Section of the Signs of a True Believer, Page 310, Ḥadīth 45

What is the difference between [فعل] or past actions and [عمل] or continuous / future actions? The first word refers to something that was done in the past which stops in the past which a person sometimes performs, whereas the second word refers to any action that is continuous.

The Noble Prophet (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) has said that, "The first characteristic of a true believer is that he is one who is continuously in thought" – by this we mean that he is not a person who is like a rock that is stationary and stagnant – rather he is one whose thoughts are continuously progressing, always in thought and is always striving to grasp new views and is never satisfied with his level of knowledge.

In this part of the Ḥadīth, the Prophet (blessings of Allāh be upon him and his family) has mentioned that the first characteristic of a true believer is in relation to his thoughts and this shows the importance of thought. The greatest act for a true believer is to be continuously in thought and as it is said that the form of worship that Abū Dharr (may Allāh be pleased with him) performed the most was thought and contemplation. If we seriously think about the outcome of the events (before we perform them) then we would not fall into the difficulties that we are in today.

The second characteristic that was mentioned is the remembrance of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) out loud – in some versions of the Ḥadīth the word [جوهري] has been replaced with the word [جهوري] however in our opinion, both forms (of the Ḥadīth) relate to the fact that the remembrance of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) should be performed out loud. It should be noted that by performing the remembrance of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) out loud does not go against the intention of doing this act simply for the pleasure of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) since in the Islāmic legislation, we have been commanded to perform the remembrance of Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) both out loud and also quietly.

In addition, we have also been told to give the Ṣadaqah and Zākah both privately and also in the open and each of these has their own benefit and advantage. When they are done in the open (for others to know about) it is a form of tablīgh or propagation of the teachings of the religion and when it is done in private and secrecy, it also brings about a special effect to the person.

The third characteristic of the true believer is that he has abundant knowledge. It has been mentioned in the aḥādīth that the Divine reward that is given to every person is based on his or her level of knowledge and intelligence. By this we mean to say that it is possible that a person prays a two Rakʿat Ṣalāt and another person performs one hundred Rakʿat of Ṣalāt however the person who performed two Rakʿat may actually receive more Divine reward (than the other person) – in reality worship has a coefficient and the coefficient of worship is knowledge and intelligence.

The fourth characteristic of the true believer is that his forbearance is great. By this we mean that just as his knowledge is vast, his forbearance too is great. A scholar interacts quite frequently with people within his society and if he does not possess forbearance, then he will definitely fall into troubles. For example we can take the forbearance and self-control of Prophet Ibrāhīm (prayers be upon him) as an example. In history, we do not have any group of people who were more corrupt than the people of Prophet Lūṭ (prayers be upon him) and their punishment too was the most frightening of all other forms of punishment:

﴿ فَلَمَّا جاءَ أَمْرَنا جَعَلْنا عالِيَها سافِلَها وَ أَمْطَرْنا عَلَيْها حِجارَةً مِنْ سِجِّيلٍ مَنْضُودٍ ﴾

*"When Our decree which was issued came to pass, We turned (the cities) upside down and rained down on them brimstones hard as baked clay spread layer upon layer."*[2]

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[2] Sūrah Hūd, Verse 82

Their punishment was such that their cities were turned completely upside down. At one point, the Angels came down to let loose the punishment on these people which consisted of the raining of stones upon them, however they first came to the presence of Prophet Ibrāhīm (prayers be upon him) and gave him the good news that a son was born to him and his wife which made Prophet Ibrāhīm (prayers be upon him) extremely happy. After hearing this, he prayed to Allāh (Glory and Greatness be to Him) for the permission to intercede for the people of the tribe of Prophet Lūṭ (prayers be upon him) and it is quoted in the Qur'ān that it was said:

﴿ فَلَمَّا ذَهَبَ عَنْ إِبْرٰاهِيمَ ٱلرَوْعَ وَ جٰاءَتْهُ ٱلْبُشْرىٰ يُجٰادِلُنٰا فِي قَوْمِ لُوطٍ. إِنَّ إِبْرٰاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوّٰاهٌ مُنِيبٌ ﴾

*"When fear had passed from (the mind of) Ibrāhīm and the glad tidings had reached him he began to plead with Us for Lūt's people. For Ibrāhīm was without doubt forbearing (of the faults of others), compassionate and given to look (towards Allāh)."*[3]

It takes a great deal of forbearance for a person to pray for his intercession to reach to a tribe of people (such as that of the people of Lūt) and this is one sign of the nobility, forbearance and magnanimous heart that Prophet Ibrāhīm (prayers be upon him) possessed. Thus with this said the scholar too must have a great deal of tolerance and as much as possible, he must try and correct the wrongs within his society slowly and not to try and remove all the wrong doings at once.

The fifth characteristic of the true believer is that his method of speech is beautiful and when he discusses or speaks to others, it is through beautiful exhortation and he does not resort to a war of words or harsh disputes. The conditions of our society today are very delicate. The dangers are only one step away from us and in these present conditions, what does our intelligence tell us to do? Should we just take any issue that comes up as a pretext or excuse to jump into the battle arena or does our intelligence tell us that the time we are living in right now is a time that demands harmony and unity?

If we pay careful attention to the news that is coming out right now, we hear that the inspectors are busy inspecting and searching 'Irāq while from another side we hear that America is preparing themselves for war (against 'Irāq) and have deployed troops all around 'Iraq and have even specified a date to launch their attack!

Other news we hear is that one of the most oppressive regimes in the world – Isrā'īl – is saying that we must attack three specific cities – Makkah, Madīnah and Qum – and that too with nuclear bombs – is there not a possibility that these reports are true?

Another report comes that the Americans have the intention that once they enter into 'Irāq, they will setup their own Military Government – this means that if they become victorious over us (Iran) as well (after they take over 'Irāq), then without doubt, they will not show mercy to any of the various factions in our country and will not give anyone a share in the government.

Other reports comes out that when the Majlis (Parliament) is locked in a battle or when a small group of University students decide to gather, then the foreign news agencies start to push and encourage this activity and ask those involved to continue their acts. Are all of these things not enough for us to wakeup and realize what is happening? Is today not the day of:

﴿ وَٱعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ ٱللّٰهِ جَمِيعاً وَلاٰ تَفرَّقُوا ﴾

*"And hold tightly to the rope of Allāh all together and do not be divided…"*

[3] Sūrah Hūd, Verse 74 & 75

Is today not the day of unity of the entire nation? What does our intelligence tell us in regards to this? The writers, those in charge of the government, the representatives of the Majlis (Parliament), the University students, and all others!! I swear by Allāh – you must all wake up! Does our intelligence tell us that anytime an issue comes up that we must use this as an excuse to gather together and make our way from the Universities to the Masjid or other parts of the city such that the enemies can take advantage of such movements and activities?

It is our hope and prayer that if there is discussion and even disagreement then these take place under the banner of:

جميل المنازعة

As this is one of the characteristics of the true believer and that we keep in mind the rules and laws and that the standards of unity are maintained.

A majority of the people within our country are religiously minded and when the Month of Ramaḍhān or the days of ʿĀshurā come long, we see the entire scene of the country changes – thus we can say that the people have a strong connection with the dīn – thus, come let us gather around the dīn which is our source of power and worth and make the best use of this agent.

…and all praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds, only the mistakes are mine. (Tr.)